**Fogera innovation platform meeting 19/7/11**

**Venue: Fogera Woreda Administration Office**

**Participants from Addis Ababa: Alan Duncan, Eva Ludi, Josephine Tucker and Alemayehu Belay**

**Introductions**

Alemayehu Belay welcomed participants and chaired a round of introductions

Alan Duncan introduced the NBDC and Nile 2 projects

Alan Duncan and Eva Ludi introduced previous experiences with innovation platforms: Ripple and Fodder Adoption Project

**Discussion**

WoARD already use the LLPPA approach which is participatory and farmer led – participants asked how the current proposed platform is different or similar and whether NBDC researchers being at a distance would represent a problem. Response: we should build on existing approaches. This platform will involve farmer representatives and will include many other stakeholders.

Concern was voiced that this should be managed locally. Response: yes we should explore ways of managing this locally.

Some concern was expressed that we are taking too long to do the baseline and still no presentation of results. We assured participants that we would present some results at next meeting but do not want to pre-empt local identification of issues. Participants were keen for quick inputs to support the Growth and Transformation Plan.

**Group work**

Participants broke into 3 groups to consider the following questions:

* What are major issues in terms of NRM/land degradation?
* What are main constraints to production in the woreda?

Feedback was as follows:

*Experts*

What are major issues in terms of NRM/land degradation?

* Population pressure leading to deforestation and farming of steep slopes
* Free grazing
* Lack of awareness
* Lack of using improved technologies
* Failure to implement SWC properly including biological conservation
* Failure to plant trees
* Not using water harvesting

*Head of offices/administration*

* Lack of awareness
* No seasonal ploughing (not sure what this means)
* Expansion of arable land into communal areas
* Lack of SWC, lack of maintenance of SWC and no biological conservation
* Flooding in one season and water scarcity in another
* Lack of materials for SWC structures

*Farmers*

* Rainfall uncertainty, natural disaster, extreme weather events
* Lack of awareness to conserve water on farm
* Building SWC structures but not maintained
* Lack of forests in higher areas

What are main constraints to production in the woreda?

*Experts*

* Backward farming practices
* Plant diseases
* Variable rainfall/weather patterns
* Too many saints days
* Not using inputs properly

*Head of offices/administration*

* Low soil fertility and lack of input use
* Free grazing
* Flooding
* Monocropping
* Single cropping season
* Low diversification of crops
* Lack of value chains, market opportunities
* Animal health problems, shortage of drugs and veterinarians
* Lack of improved feeds
* Vertisol management problems

*Farmers*

* Improper use of new technologies
* Free grazing damages crops and SWC structures
* Access to markets
* Plant diseases
* Under-developed markets for fruits and vegetables

*Which problem is most important?*

* Free grazing featured strongly
* Farmers said that things like free grazing and SWC can be dealt with by themselves but other issues such as bridge being flooded each year limiting access to market needs outside help.
* Question was then posed about why free grazing and SWC are not currently being dealt with. Good question!
* Kefe (Ethio-Wetlands) also felt that free grazing was a key issue
* Farmers thought that some piloting of free grazing solutions would be useful.
* Soil run-off used to be fertile but now is sub-soil and is of much lower quality – this is because there is no afforestation upstream. Solution would be more SWC upstream.

NBDC researchers flagged up the following:

* Indicated we could use platform to bring in relevant expertise from outside and also use it to engage with communities
* Three kebeles represented at the meeting but need to explore how to connect better with communities
* Maybe the IP should also visit communities to help make connections with communities. This was done in FAP.
* Free grazing could be an important case study for innovation
* One function of IP is to bring stakeholders together rather than simply parachuting in solutions.

**Terms of reference for the platform was then discussed**

Who should be members?

* From agriculture
  + Office of Ag
  + NRM
  + Extension
  + Irrigation
  + Input supply and technology
  + Planning and Evaluation
  + Disaster Prevention and Prepareness
  + Cooperative Promotion
  + NRM
  + Soil and forestry
* Other govt offices
  + Admin
  + Water
  + Cooperatives
  + Women’s affairs
  + Transport and health
  + Communication
  + NGO relations
* Kebele
  + administration
  + DA’s
  + Community representatives
* NGO’s
  + Ethiowetlands
  + Meda
  + SG 2000
* Research
  + Adet
  + Andassa
* Private sector
  + Rice traders
  + Model farmers who own pumps

**How will it work? Sub-groups dealing with particular issues?**

* Not specifically discussed although a suggestion from NBDC that there should be working groups at kebele level

**How often?**

* Every 3 months

**Who should facilitate?**

* NRM Dept? Someone with dedicated time.

**List of Participants at the first Innovation Platform meeting, Fogera wereda, July 19, 2011**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No** | **Name** | **Office** | **Role/Responsibility** | **Contact Number** |
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| 2 | Azmeraw Minlargeleh | Woreda Office of Agriculture | Head | 0584460027/0918280930 |
| 3 | Getasew Abebaw | Woreda Office of Administration | Office head/Deputy (?) | 0584460963 |
| 4 | Muluken Wondirad | Woreda Office of water resources | Office head | 0584461257/0918714108 |
| 5 | Anteneh Abewa | Adet Agricultural Research Center | NRM researcher | 0583380592/0918006680 |
| 6 | Zemenay Tesfaye | Woreda Office of Agriculture | Planning | 058446048 |
| 7 | Yeshareg Gedamu | Woreda Office of Agriculture | NRM expert | 0918081167 |
| 8 | Gedefaw Getnet | Woreda office of Environmental Protection and Land Administration | Office head | 0918807069 |
| 9 | Chalachew Kassie | Woreda Office of Finance and Economic Development | Office head | 0918029158 |
| 10 | Tesfaye Hailesilassie | Office of Agriculture | Extension team leader | 0918711059 |
| 11 | Molla Tilahun | Woreda Office of Agriculture | Team leader for Inputs | 0918779671 |
| 12 | Mulunesh Asres | Office of Agriculture | Disaster Preparedness and Prevention | 0918094421 |
| 13 | Keffie Minale | Ethio Wetlands and Natural Resources Association (EWNRA) | Field office coordinator | 0918706794 |
| 14 | Meseret Belachew | Recent BDU graduate, invited by the admin office |  | 0921279335 |
| 15 | Bayleyegn Endeshaw |  | Farmer | 0918028418 |
| 16 | Melkam Marie |  | Farmer |  |
| 17 | Tessema Damte |  | Farmer |  |
| 18 | Alemayehu Belay | International Livestock Research Institute | Researcher |  |
| 19 | Eva Ludi | Overseas Development Institute | Researcher |  |
| 20 | Josephine Tucker | Overseas Development Institute | Researcher |  |
| 21 | Alan Duncan | International Livestock Research Institute | Researcher | 0913 286437 |